

7

Subhā Therī,gāthā

The Verses of the Elder Nun Subhā | Thī 366-399

Theme: The true meaning of seeing

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2006

1 The Thera- and Therī,gāthā

The **Thera,gāthā** and the **Therī,gāthā** are two of the fifteen books of the Khuddaka Nikāya, “the Small Collection” of Discourses, also known as the Fifth Nikāya (*pañcama,nikāya*). While the Thera,-gāthā is a collection of verses of the elder monks (*thera*), the Therī,gāthā is an anthology of the verses of the elder nuns (*therī*). In almost every case, they are arhats. These verses are often referred to as “verses of uplift” (*udāna*) as they are usually uttered at the time of awakening or by way of joyful review.

Various comparative studies have been done on these two important and beautiful texts. **Siegfried Lienhard** (1975), for example, highlights the striking nature imagery in the Thera,gāthā and the Therī,-gāthā, and concludes, by way of a detailed literary analysis, that they draw from the tradition of erotic secular poetry and turn it into a distinctly wholesome Buddhist genre.¹

Kathryn Blackstone points out that the Thera,gāthā employs nature imagery more extensively and in more positive terms than does the Therī,gāthā—which may reflect that nuns are prohibited from forest-dwelling,² while monks are encouraged to seek forest solitude.³

Karen Lang contends that the Therī,gāthā places less emphasis on the impurity of the body than does the Thera,gāthā, where, for example, there is no reference to nuns seeking out cemeteries to meditate on male corpses (1986:78).⁴

Blackstone, on the other hand, notes that while the male composers of the Thera,gāthā tend to emphasize the foulness of women's bodies, the female composers of the Therī,gāthā tend to emphasize the foulness of their own bodies (1998:59-81).

Scholars generally agree that it is difficult to know whether these verses were actually composed or uttered by the elders themselves. However, the structure of the poem does provide an indication of the method by which they were constructed.⁵ The verses, for example, are very repetitive, as collated by **William Stede**, in his listing of “The Pādas of the Thera- and Therī-gāthā.”⁶ Such identical terms, phrases, even lines or stanzas, possibly indicate the existence of a large common pool of refrains and phrases available to the elders.

K R Norman thinks, “It seems likely that some of these verses are very old, perhaps older than Buddhism, for they are found in Jain and Brahmanical literature.”⁷ It was a time before the concept of copyright in ancient India, and any elder or poet could compose his own verses, or freely repeat a verse he has heard, or borrow them from what John Brough calls “the treasure-house of versified tags.”⁸

¹ Cf Lienhard 1984:75-79.

² For an important reason, see 4(2), Uppala,vaṇṇā, n.

³ The nun Uppala,vaṇṇā is raped in her own cell in Andha,vana (the Dark Forest) by her own cousin, Ānanda, who is in madly love with her. Thenceforth, nuns are forbidden to reside in forests. See below on Uppala,vaṇṇā, 4(2).

⁴ However, Comy to Abhayā's verses (Thī 35-36) says that she goes to the Sita,vana to observe an object of impurity. The Buddha however causes a holographic image of such an object to appear before. Seeing this, she experiences samvega. Then the Buddha himself appears before him and instructs her. Later, after gaining arhathood, she repeats these instructions in her verses. (ThīA 41).

⁵ Blackstone 1998:4.

⁶ JPTS 1924-27:31-226, esp 197-226: his table of repeated pādas.

⁷ Norman, Tha:N xxi.

⁸ Gāndhārī Dharmapada, London, 1862: xvii.

2 Therī,gāthā as literature

2.1 THE THERĪ,GĀTHĀ AS A TEXT. The Therī,gāthā is an anthology of 522 verses in 73 poems or cantos, numerically arranged in chapters (*nipāta*), beginning with a group of single verses, and so on up to 14 verses, followed by groups of 20 to 70 verses, and finally the Great Chapter (*Mahā,nipāta*) in 75 verses. These verses are traditionally said to have been uttered by 101 elder nuns.⁹

The Therī,gāthā is significant in that it is “the first surviving poetry supposed to have been composed by women in India...[t]he poetically excellent quality of these verses is not matched by Indian poetesses of later periods.” (Hinüber 1996:108).¹⁰ Furthermore, as far as we know, “it is the only canonical text in the world’s religions that is attributed to female authorship and that focuses exclusively on women’s religious experiences.” (Blackstone 1998:1).¹¹ Evidence from scholarly research “supports the view that the verses collected together in [the Therī,gāthā] were uttered over a period of 300 years, from the end of the 6th century to the end of the 3rd century BC” (Thī:N xx), that is, from the time of the Buddha up to Asoka.¹²

2.2 THE THERĪ,GĀTHĀ: A LITERARY EVALUATION. The Subhā Therī,gāthā, a verse narrative from start to end, is one of the most dramatic episodes in Buddhist hagiography. The whole poem employs a highly effective use of dramatic contrast of the worldly or sensual (the rogue) against the spiritual (Subhā). Significantly, the rogue is unnamed: we are really nobody when we are drowned in negative emotions; for it is the way of the crowd and the world. Only in rising out of the crowd and letting go of negative emotions that we become true individuals,¹³ here represented by the name Subhā, meaning “beautiful.” Then we, too, are truly beautiful.

Kevin Trainor, in his study of the Subhā Therī,gāthā, comments that

Subhā’s verse, one of the longest in the Therī,gāthā, reveals a good deal of literary self-consciousness. Set in the form of a dialogue, the interaction of Subhā and the rogue who accosts her on the path to Jīvaka’s mango grove is expressed in a kind of literary fugue,¹⁴ with the voices of the two characters following a common theme: an exploration of the nature of the human body. Yet while the two voices share a common subject, they issue forth from two fundamentally discordant views of reality, and it is only at the conclusion of the composition that some sort of harmony is achieved. (Trainor 1993:63)

Of some literary interest, too, is its sensuous evocation of nature. Indeed, the account here is that of a classic example of how a woman’s spirituality changes the mind of a frivolous youth who intends to seduce, even rape, her.

⁹ This number is at best traditional. The “summary” or envoi (*uddāna*) at the end of the text says that there are 494 verses uttered by 101 nuns (Thī p174). According to **Mizuno**, the actual number of nuns who spoke the verses is only 73 (1993:81). It should be noted that one of the poems is said to be uttered by a group of 30 nuns (Thī 117-121), another by a group of 500 nuns (Thī 127-132): see Hinüber 1996. It should also be noted that not all the verses in a particular poem are spoken by her. A few of these verses are variously spoken by the Buddha, by monks, by other nuns, even by laymen and laywomen, or by Māra. In the dialogue btw Cāpā and her husband, Upaka (Thī 291-211), the verses are not even connected to a nun! See Thī:N xix for details.

¹⁰ The rather insignificant amount of literature in Skt written by women has been collected by Chaudhuri, *The Contribution of Women to Sanskrit Literature*. Calcutta, 1939-1943. I (1943), IIa (1939), III/IV (1940), VIb (1940), VIb (1940) (all published?) (Hinüber’s biblio 1996:211). See Hinüber 1996:107-108.

¹¹ There is another collection—the **Iti,vuttaka** (one of the 15 books of the Khuddaka Nikāya)—that is compiled by a woman, Khujj’uttarā, but it is an anthology of the Buddha’s teachings.

¹² See also Hinüber 1996: 107.

¹³ On the “true individual,” see SD 19.3(6.6); also “Me”: the nature of conceit = SD 19.2a.

¹⁴ **Fugue**, here referring to musical piece with repeated themes that answer one another.

A K Warder, in his study of *Pāli Metre*, regards the Subhā Therī,gāthā as a particularly good example of lyric poetry,¹⁵ apparently a dramatic performance resembling, but antedating, classical Sanskrit drama (1967:136 f). Such verses, in other words, are didactic or instructive. Subhā's story serves as an inspiration for us even today

3 The two Subhās

3.1 SUBHĀ KAMMĀRA,DHĪTĀ. There are two arhat nuns named Subhā in the Therī,gāthā. The first is Subhā Kammāra,dhītā (the smith's daughter). Her father is a rich goldsmith of Rājagaha. One day, she goes to pay obeisance to the Buddha, and after hearing the Dharma from him becomes a streamwinner. Later, she joins the order under Mahā Pajāpatī. From time to time her relatives try to persuade her to leave the order and return to the world.

One day she composes twenty four verses on the dangers of household life and dismisses them, convinced of her practice. Then, striving for insight, she attains arhathood on the eighth day (Thī 338-361). The Buddha sees this and praises her in three verses (Thī 362-364). Sakra, along with the gods of Tāvātimsa, visit to honour her (Thī 365; ThīA 236 f). [4(21)]

3.2 SUBHĀ JĪVAK'AMBA,VANIKĀ. The Subhā whose verses are translated here is called Subhā Jīvaka'amba,vanikā, or Subhā of Jīvaka's Mango Grove,¹⁶ so called either because the incident recounted in her Therī,gāthā occurs there, or because she resides there. Dhamma,pāla, in his Therī,gāthā Commentary,¹⁷ says that Subhā performed meritorious deeds under previous Buddhas, and so accumulated good karma in various lives for her spiritual liberation.

In her last life, she is born in the time of our Buddha, into an eminent brahmin family of Rājagaha. She is called Subhā because she is physically beautiful (*sobhana,vanṇa,yutta*, ThīA 245). She gains faith as a lay follower after listening to the Teacher in Rājagaha. Later, seeing the danger in sense-pleasures, samvega (a sense of spiritual urgency)¹⁸ arises in her concerning samsara (cycle of life and death). Considering renunciation as being peaceful, she renounces the world under Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī.

She devotes herself to the practice of spiritual insight, and in a few days attains the fruit of non-return. One day, as she is going for her noonday siesta in Jīvaka's mango grove, a handsome, drunken rogue, a libertine (*dhuttaka*), in the prime of youth (the son of a rich goldsmith of Rājagaha), captivated by her beauty, blocks her way, and accosts her. She speaks to him of the various dangers of sense-pleasures and her own inclination to renunciation, but he persists in his advances (ThīA 250). [4(28)]

Even though Subhā teaches him the Dharma, he does not repent. The youth confesses that he is infatuated with her beautiful eyes. Learning of this, she plucks out one of her eyes and hands it to him.¹⁹ The youth is utterly shocked, trembling with samvega. Immediately, his passion disappears, and he asks for her forgiveness. Subhā then leaves and goes to see the Buddha. And seeing the Buddha, her eye is whole again.

3.3 THE MAIN THEME OF THE SUBHĀ THERĪ,GĀTHĀ. The main theme of the Subhā Therī,gāthā is that of seeing or vision, of what it means to really see. The climax of the poem is when Subhā tears out her eye and gives it to the infatuated rogue, immediately effecting a change of heart in him.

¹⁵ Lyric poetry—in ancient Greece, verses sung (to the lyre)—refers to either poetry that has the form and musical quality of a song, or a usually short poem that expresses personal feelings, which may or may not be set to music (*The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, 1992). It is to be distinguished from *dramatic poetry* (drama with spoken verse) and *narrative poetry* (stories told in verse). However, their boundaries are often flexible.

¹⁶ **Jīvaka S** (M 55), SD 43.4.

¹⁷ *Param'attha,dīpanī* vol 6, Pali ed E Möller (1893), rev ed W Pruitt (1997), and Eng tr W Pruitt (1999): see biblio.

¹⁸ *Samvega*, religious emotion or sense of spiritual urgency, ie, the kind of feeling that arises in prince Siddhattha when he sees the 4 sights = SD 9.7f.

¹⁹ It is interesting that while the Christian Bible thrice speaks of plucking out “the eye that offends thee” (Matt 5:29, 18:9; Mk 9:47), we have here an actual case for spiritual reflection.

The physical eye is only useful in its bodily context and proper attention, functioning as the eye-faculty. Taken out of its socket, however, an eye is totally deprived of its beauty and functionality. It is only as useful as what it does. Taken out of its context, it is useless, even fearful and gory. While Subhā uses her eyes wisely, seeing true reality, the rogue has only the eye of sensuality, seeing only false surface reality, and failing to see beyond.

The eye, like the other sense-faculties, indeed, like life itself, is not a collectible: it is to be felt, to be lived. When the rogue finally is given what he lusts for, he realizes that it is not really what he has perceived it to be. He is shocked by what he sees into the window of true reality. However, we are only told that he repents and leaves (ThīA 246): so we do not know whether he benefits further from the drama.

The Subhā story is that of true giving: in a literal sense, she actually gives the rogue what he wants, and in doing so, she not only makes a supreme sacrifice in the spirit of the historical Bodhisattva (who would readily give up even his own life for others). Ironically, although it appears to be a material gift (*āmisā,dāna*), the effect is that it is really a spiritual gift (*nirāmisā,dāna*), that is, the highest gift, the gift of the Dharma. She makes him see true reality, or at least a glimpse of it.

3.4 A PARAPHRASE OF THE SUBHĀ THERĪ,GĀTHĀ

3.4.1 The Subhā Therī,gāthā is one of the longest of the elder nuns' verses, the Therī,gāthā, and is the only one in the "Group of 30 verses" (*tiṃsa nipāta*). Although Dhammapāla says that Subhā has uttered these verses as her solemn utterance, apparently the opening verse [v366] and the concluding four verses [vv396-399] are those of the Council Elders (*saṅgīti,kāra*).²⁰ It is possible, however, that these narrative lines have been added by Dhammapāla himself for proper narrative coherence (that is, if they were not already added during the First Council).

3.4.2 The narrators (said to be the Council Elders) say that while the nun Subhā is on her way alone to Jīvaka's mango grove for a noonday siesta, a rogue blocks her path and accosts her. Dhammapāla says that the unnamed accoster,²¹ a rich goldsmith's son in the prime of his youth, is not only a rogue with women (*itthi,dhutta*), but also intoxicated (ThīA 246, 250).

3.4.3 The second verse [v367] reveals that the drunken youth physically coerces her. We could well imagine the worst here: the young drunken rogue is poised to pin the beautiful young nun Subhā down to the ground to rape her.²²

"What wrong have I done that you stand in my way?" Of course, she has done none, says the Dhammapāla, but he is intent on the perception or mental sign,²³ "A woman!" (ThīA 250). To show that this is not fitting, Subhā protests, reminding him of her religious state, that the Buddha's teaching forbids such misdeeds [v368], and that they are of opposite minds: his unhinged, hers blemish-free [v369]. The rogue then begins his rationalizing: "You are young and not bad-looking [innocent] (*apāpika*)," meaning, as Dhammapāla points out, that "only old women or those of bad appearance should go forth." (ThīA 251).²⁴

²⁰ Subhā speaks the foll: 367-369, 380, 384-395, 396c; the rogue: 370-379, 381-383, 397cd-398; and the *saṅgīti,kāra*: 366, 396abd, 397ab, 399.

²¹ The fact that the accoster is unnamed is significant: it is not the doer but the deed that is of moral significance.

²² The nun Uppala,vanṇā, however, was raped in a forest: see [3], under Uppala,vanṇā n.

²³ On "mental sign" (*nimitta*), see **Nimitta**, SD 19.7, esp §71(2), & also **Nimitta & anuvyañjana**, SD 19.14.

²⁴ Cf (**Devatā**) **Samiddhi S** (S 1.20), where a devata tries to seduce a young monk (S 1.20/1:8-12), SD 21.4. In the ancient Mesopotamian epic poem, *Epic of Gilgamesh* (c 2000 BCE), Siduri (an "alewife" or wise female divinity) attempts to dissuade the hero Gilgamesh in his quest for immortality, urging him to enjoy life as it is: "As for you, Gilgamesh, fill your belly with good things; day and night, night and day, dance and be merry, feast and rejoice. Let your clothes be fresh, bathe yourself in water, cherish the little child that holds your hand, and make your wife happy in your embrace; for this too is the lot of man." Another famous mundane parallel would be the *carpe diem* ("seize the day") notion: "Seize the day and place no trust in tomorrow" (*carpe diem quam minimum credula postero*) (Horace, *Odes* 1.11). The emphasis in such as saying is on making the most of current opportunities because life is short and time flies. Cf the Bible passages Ecclesiastes 9.7-9 with Isaiah 22.13 & 1 Corinthians 15.32. See also Shakespeare's poem *Carpe Diem* (<http://www.bartleby.com/106/26.html>). Reflect on these passages with a Dharma heart.

3.4.4 So he bluntly accosts her [v370] with a thinly veiled sexual litany. While the religious find the beauty of nature conducive for spiritual practice, the immoral find the solitude ideal for sensual pursuits [v371]. While the spiritual enjoy the solitude that is conducive for meditation and mindfulness practice, the immoral seek to impose themselves upon it. While the spiritual find harmony with nature, it arouses the immoral's biological instincts [v372].

3.4.5 Failing to persuade Subhā, the rogue now tries to frighten her, reminding her of the presence of wild beasts in the forest, again referring to them in sexual terms [v373]. He then compares Subhā to a dead object, "a doll made of shining gold," and an out-of-this-world mythical apsara (again a sensual being),²⁵ and sings external things in beautiful clothing. Only her *external* features are valued [v374].

3.4.6 Then the rogue goes into the classic expression of infatuation, ironically claiming that he would "yield" to her power, when the reality is just the contrary. He proposes that they should cohabit in the grove (like the animals?) [v375], in a house with servants [v376], promising her beautiful clothes and ornaments, even vowing to make some himself (as he is a goldsmith's son, after all) [v377]. Then, he uses a bed imagery, evoking luxury and sensuality [v378].

There is a hint of desperation in what follows: why waste your beauty away and grow old unconsummated? He addresses her as *brahma, cārīnī* (celibate woman), finally openly acknowledging her true personal state [v379].

3.4.7 Thinking that he might be ready for the Dharma, Subhā then responds with an instruction on the perception of the body's foulness (*asubha, saññā*) [v380], trying to impress on the rogue that his body, too, is of the same foul nature. There is dramatic irony here: *Subhā* (the beautiful) is practising *asubha*, the perception of the foul! But the young intoxicated rogue is deaf to the truth, caught in the rut of his beauty-sign, that is, Subhā's doe-like eyes, and he sings its praises in three verses [vv381-382]. He is effectively drawn to only *a part* of her person, unable to see her as *a whole* person. Interestingly, all the eye-imageries the rogue uses allude to the animal (a doe), the non-human ("a kinnari²⁶ in the mountains"), the inanimate (gold), or at best a plant (lotus bud). This is clearly the language of a tragic lover.

Dhammapāla explains Subhā's "doe-like eyes" (*akkhīni ca turīyā-r-iva*) at some length, saying that the rogue is attracted to Subhā's very calm, clear and restrained senses. Even at a glance, her eyes exude the five kinds of clarity.²⁷ The rogue claims that he will always remember her, even when far from sight, but he is merely thinking of "your long eye-lashes, your pure gaze" claiming that "no eyes are dearer to me than yours, O kinnari of gentle eyes!" [v383]. He sees her only in terms of what he could *have*, rather than what she truly *is*. By now the rogue is clearly not only physiologically fixated, but mentally intoxicated, too.

3.4.8 Subhā now begins her final appeal of Dharma instructions, and begins by stating the simple fact that the rogue has gone off-track and is totally infatuated in sensually lusting for a renunciant. To lust after her eyes is like taking the moon to be a ball for sport: the eye, after all, functions as the seeing faculty, not a plaything. Mt Meru or Sineru here is the mythical axis mundi, the centre of the universe: it is not only impossible for a worldling (like the rogue) to reach it, much less to jump over it!

3.4.9 She announces that she has abandoned all lust: after all, she is a non-returner²⁸ (ThīA 246) [v385]. Then she goes on to warn the rogue of the dangers of sense-pleasure using the imageries of fire and of poison [v386]: first, lust burns like fire; then it consumes and destroys us just as poison does. It might be possible for a rich handsome youth like the rogue to seduce someone unmindful, that is, ignorant

²⁵ Apsara: see v374b n.

²⁶ "Kinnari" (*kinnarī*), see 375d n.

²⁷ ThīA 254; cf DA 3:397; J 3:344. Elsewhere, this is said to mean that the eye is endowed with five kinds of colour (*pañca, vaṇṇa, pasāda, sampattiyā*) (MA 3:402; SnA 2:453). The 5 colours probably are blue (*nīla*), yellow (*pīṭa*), red (*lohita*), light orange-ochre (*mañjeṭṭha*) or crystal (*phalika*), and a composite of them (*pabhassara*) (V 1:25; BA 38; cf M 1:509, 511). The meaning here apparently is that the eyes scintillate with these colours. Cf J 5:165.

²⁸ Non-returner (*anāgāmi*), ie, a saint who is liberated by the abandoning of the "five lower fetters," viz, self-identity view, doubt, clinging to rules and rituals, sensual craving, and ill will: see **Kīṭā, giri S** (M 70), SD 11.1 (5.1).

of the nature of the five aggregates, or someone who has not seen the embodiment of the Dharma (that is, the Buddha), but not so to seduce a wisely mindful person or a Buddha's true disciple. Subhā is telling him that it is impossible to seduce someone like her, and any such attempt would have negative moral implications on him [v387].

3.4.10 On a happier note, Subhā describes her spiritual state: she is equanimous and unattached to the world [v388], and as a learner (*sekha*), she delights in meditating [v389]. She well knows what the physical body is like (it is made up of the four elements and is impermanent, etc), that is, she has overcome the self-identity view [v390].

Verse 390 aptly uses the imagery of puppets, whose strings are controlled by others. The imagery applies on two levels: the social and the spiritual. On a social level, Subhā is stating that she is free from the male-dominated ways of society, of the dehumanizing and delimiting social roles available to women in her times. More specifically, she is hinting to the rogue that she is not falling into a subservient role as the rogue's playmate or wife.

3.4.11 More importantly, on a spiritual level, she has transcended all notions of sexuality, and is no more controlled by the cords of sense-pleasures nor by unwholesome habits. She declares that she has gone beyond the physical body, knowing it to be a mere mental construction [v391], so that she is no more dictated by her thoughts and is beyond mental projections and labels [v392]. She explains the nature of perception in a series of imageries: it is as unreal as a wall-painting [v393], a dream, a magician's illusion [v394].

3.4.12 Subhā then zeroes in on the very thing that the rogue is infatuated with: her eyes. Again, she explains them by way of the perception of foulness, reflecting on the eye's structure and natural characteristics [v395]. In a dramatic turn, she plucks out one of her eyes and hands it to the rogue [v396], who is of course utterly shocked. A thing of beauty is only in its context, but when plucked out of its setting, its true beauty is gone.

The more lust we have for a thing, the more traumatic it is when it turns out to be other than what we perceive it be. Samvega finally arises in the trembling youth, and his passion ceases at once (ThīA 246). Jolted back into sanity, he begs for her forgiveness and declares contrition [v397], finally realizing the true dangers of his trespass [v398], and finally departs (ThīA 246).

3.4.13 Subhā, relieved of her predicament, goes to see the Buddha, and upon seeing him, her eye is whole again [v399]. This verse is interesting on at least two accounts. Firstly, she is "freed from him" (*muttā ca tato*), which can also be freely rendered as "freed from *that*,"²⁹ meaning that she is not only liberated from the menacing rogue, but also from the stifling role that sexuality dictates. Throughout her encounter, she never sees herself as a woman or in any sexual manner.³⁰

In fact, she is already a non-returner when the rogue advanced upon her, but now she is free to further pursue full awakening. Secondly, in this closing verse, we see a sharp contrast, a quantum shift, in somatic imagery: from the debate over the corrupt nature of the physical body to the extraordinary qualities of the pure Buddha-body.

3.4.14 The Commentary says that even as she stands there, gazing at the Buddha, she experiences uninterrupted zest (ThīA 246).³¹ The Buddha, knowing her ripe state of mind, teaches her the Dharma, and then explains a meditation subject to her for gaining the highest path. Letting go of her joy, she immediately cultivates insight and gains arhathood along with the four analytic knowledges.³² Having attained

²⁹ On "not-that-ness," see *Atammayatā*, SD 19.13.

³⁰ She is here a classic example of one who has risen above being a mere woman or any sexual identity: see *Saññoga S* (A 7.48/4:57-59), SD 8.7 esp §4.4.

³¹ Prob just as the Buddha does to the Bodhi tree during the 2nd week after the awakening (MA 2:184; UA 52; BA 8; J 1:77): see *Dhamma and Abhidhamma*, SD 26.1(5).

³² **The 4 analytic knowledges** (*pañisambhidā*) are, viz, the analytic knowledges (1) of meanings [true expression of reality] (*attha,pañisambhidā*); (2) of meanings [mental states or truth, ie instructing commensurate with the mental level and state of the listener] (*dhmma,pañisambhidā*); (3) of language [clear and fitting expression of truth] (*nirutti,pañisambhidā*); and (4) of ready wit [effective and joyful expression of truth] (*pañibhāna,pañisambhidā*) (A 2:160;

arhathood, she dwells in the bliss of nirvana. Then reviewing her attainment, recalling her conversation with the rogue youth, utters them as her solemn utterance (*udāna*) as recounted in the Subhā Therī, gāthā. (Thī 366-399; ThīA 245-260)

4 Subhā and the other nuns of the Therī, gāthā

The story of Subhā of Jīvaka's Mango Grove is most interesting and unique when compared to the other accounts of early Buddhist women. Let us, in this connection, briefly look at some of remarkable women of the Buddha's time, as found in the Therī, gāthā:³³

- (1) **Abhirūpa, nandā**, a beautiful Sakya girl, is made to renounce by her parents, against her own wishes, following the death of her cousin, Cara, bhūta, whom she is to marry. (Thī 19/19-20)
- (2) **Uppala, vaṇṇā**, daughter of a Sāvattthī seth (entrepreneur), has too many suitors, including kings and commoners, all suitable ones. To resolve the problem, her father suggests that she renounces the world. The Vinaya and the Commentaries³⁴ record that she, despite her protestations, is raped in her own cell in Andha, vana (the Dark Forest) by her own cousin, who is in madly love with her.³⁵ She is blameless as she is an unwilling party (Pār 1.10.5 = V 3:35). Apparently, it is after this incident that nuns are forbidden to reside in forests (Cv 10.23 = V 2:278).³⁶ (Thī 64/224-235)
- (3) **Kisā Gotamī**. There are 3 versions of her well-known story.³⁷ (Thī 224-235)
- (4) **Khemā** of Sāgala (daughter of the king of the Madda people), king Bimbisāra's consort, was infatuated with her beauty. The Commentaries say that she attains arhathood on witnessing a holographic sequence (which naturally leads to her becoming a nun).³⁸ The Apadāna however says that this breakthrough occurs only after she has entered the order.³⁹ She is the foremost of the nuns (the right-hand nun), and also foremost of the nuns with great insight (A 1:25). (Thī 52/139-144)
- (5) **Dhamma, dinnā** of Rājagaha has no difficulty in obtaining her husband's permission, Visākha, to join the order, as he himself has just decided to do so himself.⁴⁰ (Thī 12/12)
- (6) **Therīkā** of Vesālī,⁴¹ having heard of both the Buddha and Mahā Pajāpati, decides to join the order, but is unable to obtain her husband's consent. Humbly she goes on with her household duties without protest. One day when the curry she is cooking is consumed by the flames, she reflects on this with insight, and gives up wearing ornaments, dressing simply. Her husband is impressed and gives his consent for her renunciation. (Thī 1/1)

Pm 1:119; Vbh 294): in short, this comprises the meaning, the mental state, the word, and the joy of the true teaching.

³³ See I B Horner 1930:162-210 (ch 3 pts 1-2) on a similar discussion of the nuns of Thī.

³⁴ But not ThīA, which only says that Māra tries to distract her during her siesta in the sal grove, warning her of the dangers of rogues there (Thī 230-235; also at S 1:131 f with vll).

³⁵ AA 1:355 f; DhA 5.10/2:48 f.

³⁶ Buddhaghosa adds that the Buddha then requests king Pasenadi to build quarters for the nuns within the city (DhA 2:51 f). This incident also gives rise to the question whether an arhat enjoys sense-pleasure, but the answer is clearly *no* since he/she has no more defilement (DhA 26.18/4:116 f). Thī 224 & ThīA 195 f say that both Uppala, vaṇṇā and her mother were unwittingly co-wives of the same man (ThīA 196), a fact not attested elsewhere. As such, I B Horner thinks that she is probably different from her namesake of the other Comys (V:H 1:53 n5). It is possible that the AA & DhA accounts have conflated the two Uppala, vaṇṇās.

³⁷ SD 43.2 (Intro).

³⁸ DhA 4:58 f, 168 f; B 26.19; J 1:15 f.

³⁹ Ap 2:543-551 = ThAp 18.

⁴⁰ While she is herself an arhat, her husband Visākha is a non-returner. See **Cūḷa vedalla S** (M 44/1:299-305), 40a.9. Cf Sumedhā (Thī 73/448-522) below, who renounces just before her marriage.

⁴¹ It is likely that Therīkā, meaning "little sturdy," is her nickname, since she is of sturdy build (ThīA 5). As such, I do not think its translation as "a certain unknown nun" is warranted.

- (7) **Dhammā** of Sāvathī, however, is not so fortunate, as she is unable to obtain her husband's consent, and obediently remains in the house until his death, after which she renounces the world. (Thī 17/17)
- (8) **Sundarī,nandā**, the sister of Nanda (the Buddha's handsome half-brother), who, like Abhirūpa,nandā (Thī 19/19-20) (1), is infatuated with her own beauty. She becomes a nun after all her near relatives have joined the order. Her motive is clear: she does not renounce out of faith, but out of love for her kin. However, listening to the Buddha's teachings, she becomes a stream-winner, and then, an arhat. (Thī 41/82-86)
- (9) **Amba,pālī**, the courtesan of Vesālī, is also its best known inhabitant, sought after by royalty, including king Bimbisāra. By her, the king sires a son, Vimala Koṇḍañña, who, after becoming a monk, teaches the Dharma to her, whereupon she herself decides to join the order. Amba,pālī's poem is one of the most beautiful in religious literature.⁴² (Thī 66/252-270)
- (10) **Abhaya,mātā** or Paduma,vaṭī, the courtesan of Ujjenī, is also sought after by king Bimbisāra who sires him a son, Abhaya Rāja,kumāra. Abhaya, after becoming a monk, teaches her the Dharma, and she then joins the order. (Thī 33-34)
- (11) **Abhayā**, a close friend of Paduma,vaṭī (Abhaya,mātā) (10), joins the order following her example. (Thī 27/35 f)
- (12) **Vijayā**, too, like Abhayā (11), joins the order, following the example of her close friend, Khemā (4). (Thī 57/169-174)
- (13) **Cālā, Upacālā and Sisupacālā**, Sāriputta's three sisters, based on wise faith in a trustworthy example, emulate their famous saint brother in joining the order. (Thī 59/182-188, 60/189-195, 61/196-203)
- (14) **Sumanā**, out of filial love for her grandmother, postpones her own renunciation (much as she is inclined to go forth), to take care of her, and only joins the order after her passing, and when she herself is of advanced age. (Thī 16/16)
- (15) **Purāṇa,gaṇikā**, a courtesan's daughter, is made to repent her loose lifestyle by Mahā Moggallāna. She first becomes a lay disciple and then a nun. She is the only one of the five women of loose morals⁴³ to join the order under such an influence. Hence, her epithet Purāṇa,gaṇikā, "the former courtesan," but personal name is unknown. (Thī 39/72-76)
- (16) **Aḍḍha,kāsī**, the daughter of a seth (entrepreneur) of Kāsī, and the courtesan of Rāja,gaha. We have no details of why she decides to join the order. The Vinaya only says that hearing the Buddha's teaching, she decides to renounce the world, but on her way to see the Buddha, she is waylaid by libertines. The Buddha then introduces a special allowance, that is, ordination by proxy.⁴⁴ (Thī 25 f; Ap 2:610 f)
- (17) **Sīhā** of Vesālī and niece of Sīha Senā,pati, upon hearing the Buddha teaching Sāriputta, joins the order with her parents' consent. However, even after seven years, she is unable to progress spiritually, despite her efforts. In desperation, she ties a noose around her neck and fastens it to a tree. In that awkward position, she gains insight, and frees herself. (Thī 40/77-81)
- (18) **Muttā**, daughter of Oghātaka, a poor brahmin of Kosala, has a hunchback (*vaṅka*) for a husband, and **Sumaṅgala,mātā**, born in to a poor family of Sāvathī, is married to a rush-plaiter (*naḷakāra*). On renouncing the world, they joyfully free themselves from the drudgery of household work and their respective unappreciative husbands. (Thī 11/11, 21/23 f)

⁴² Cf Norman 1983:76.

⁴³ These 5 women evidently are Amba,pālī (9), Abhaya,mātā (10), Abhayā (11), Purāṇa,gaṇikā (15) and Sirimā. The last-named is also a courtesan of Rājagaha, and who is converted by none other than the Buddha himself (B 36.20; DhA 3:104 f; VvA 74 ff): see **Isi,dāsī & Sirimā**, SD 3.8. Cf Lina Eckenstein, *Women Under Monasticism* 1896:193: see <http://www.yale.edu/adhoc/etexts/Eckstn1.htm>.

⁴⁴ Cv 10.22 = V 2:277 f.

- (19) **Guttā** of Sāvattihī, however, born into a wealthy family and unmarried, actually finds her luxurious life such an unsatisfactory burden that she becomes a nun. However, even as a nun she is unable to meditate, that is, until she receives help from the Buddha. (Thī 56/163-168)
- (20) **Isi,dāsī** of Ujjenī is married to a merchant of Sāketa, but it is a failed marriage from the start. Then follows a string of more failed marriages because none of her husbands finds her desirable. Finally, with her father's consent, she joins the order. (Thī 72/400-407)⁴⁵
- (21) **Subhā Kammāra,dhītā** (the smith's daughter) of Rājagaha [3.1], hears the Dharma from the Buddha and becomes a streamwinner. She leaves the world under Mahā Pajāpati and, on occasions, her relatives try to persuade her to return to the world. On the eighth day, she becomes an arhat. (Thī 70/338-365)
- (22) **Bhaddā Kuṇḍala,kesā**, the daughter of Rājagaha seth, and **Nand'uttarā**, the daughter of a Kammasā,damma brahmin, are two examples of women (unrelated) who are highly trained intellectually, and who cannot rest until they have found an opening for the exercise of their talents. **Bhaddā**, as a young girl, falls for and marries an ungrateful young thief, who later tries to kill her. She outwits and kills him instead. Then she becomes a Jain nun, practising painful austerities. She has a public debate with Sāriputta at Jeta,vana but is defeated. Later, listening to the Buddha, she becomes an arhat and joins the order. (Thī 46/107-111)
- (23) **Nand'uttarā**, a renowned itinerant speaker who meets Moggallāna and is converted by him in debate. On his advice, she joins the order. (Thī 42/87-91)
- (24) **Ubbirī**, born into a wealthy Sāvattihī family, and because of her beauty, marries the king of Kosala. She bears him a daughter, which pleases the king so much that she is anointed a queen. But the child suddenly dies, and she is distraught. The Buddha appears to her at the charnel ground, and she is freed of her grief. (Thī 33/51-53)
- (25) **Kisā Gotamī** of Sāvattihī is one of the most tragic figures in Buddhist literature. After some difficulty, she finds a husband, and in due course bears him a child. Unfortunately the infant dies and she falls into a profound state of denial, seeking a remedy for him. After the famous mustard-seed episode, she realizes the universal nature of impermanence and death, and is healed. She becomes a nun and in due course awakens to arhathood. (Thī 63/213-223)⁴⁶
- (26) **Paṭācārā** of Sāvattihī is clearly the most tragic figures in Buddhist literature. The overprotected daughter of a Sāvattihī seth, she who elopes with her servant boy. She gives birth to two sons, each time in the discomfort of the forest in inclement weather. During her last journey home, she loses all her family—children, husband, brother and parents—within the same day. Understandably, she goes raving mad, but is in due course healed by the Buddha. (Thī 47/112-116)⁴⁷
- (27) **Sumedhā** of Mantā,vaṭī is the daughter of king Koṅka of Mantā,vaṭī.⁴⁸ Even as a child, she would go with her peers and slaves to hear the Dharma at the nuns' quarters. As such, she is able to see the dangers of samsara from an early age. Hearing that she is to be betrothed to king Anika,ratta of Vāraṇa,vaṭī, she decides to go forth, proposing that she would otherwise go on a hunger strike (Thī 460). Hearing that Anika,ratta is coming to see her, she retires to her chamber, cuts off her hair and uses it as her object of meditation of foulness, attaining the first dhyana (Thī 480; ThīA 286). When Anika,ratta meets here, she is already out of her dhyana, doing the perception of impermanence. After she explains her Dharma inclination, Anika,ratta is convinced and invites her to go forth. She goes to the nuns' quarters and joins the order. Sumedhā is clearly the happiest example of a woman who is clear about her spiritual vocation right from the start, and attains her goal on her own will. She is also accorded the most honoured position as the last of the Therī,-gāthā, with the most number of verses.⁴⁹ (Thī 73/448-522)

⁴⁵ For her remarkable story, see **Isi,dāsī & Sirimā**, SD 3.8.

⁴⁶ For a detailed study, see SD 43.2.

⁴⁷ For a detailed study, see SD 43.3.

⁴⁸ Mantā,vaṭī is nowhere mentioned except here (Thī 448) and in ThīA 272, 274.

⁴⁹ Cf Dhamma,dinnā (Thī 12/12) who as a matter of course goes forth, following her husband's renunciation.

- (28) **Subhā of Jīvaka’s Mango Grove** is said to be a very beautiful woman, physically attractive in all her limbs. But unlike Khemā (Thī canto 52) (4) or Sundarī,nandā (Thī canto 41) (8), she is not infatuated with her own beauty. On the contrary, she, like Sumedhā (Thī canto 73) (27), sees danger in the cycle of rebirth and in sense-pleasures, which in due course leads to her renouncing the world. However, in the cases of the other women, no matter what their circumstances, they all attained the highest sainthood, and are moved to utter these inspired verses (*udāna*).

— — —

Verses of the Elder Nun Subhā of Jīvaka’s Mango Grove

Thī 366-399

[The Council Elders:]

- 1 While the nun Subhā | was going to the delightful Jīvaka’s mango grove,
a rogue stops her. | So Subhā says this to him:⁵⁰ [366]

[Subhā:]

- 2 What wrong have I done to you | that you stand in my way?
It’s not fitting, sir, | that a man should touch a woman gone forth. [367]

- 3 In my Teacher’s strict teaching, | taught by the Sugata [the well-farer],
is the blemish-free purified state. | Why do you stand in my way? [368]

- 4 Disturbed is your mind, undisturbed am I; | dusted in passion are you, dustfree am I;
without any depravity. All my mind is liberated: | Why do you stand in my way? [369]

[The rogue:]

- 5 You are young and not bad-looking [innocent]:⁵¹ | what good is going-forth for you?
Throw away your brown robes! | Come let us delight in the flowering grove! [370]

- 6 The trees,⁵² their sweetness wafting | and flower pollen welling up all around.⁵³
Early spring is a joyous season! | Come let us delight in the flowering grove! [371]

- 7 And the trees with flowery crests cry out, as it were, | when stirred by the breeze.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ This stanza’s metre is śloka, while all the rest Vaitāliya (AK Warder, *Pāli Metre*, 1967: 94). This would support the Comy statement that this stanza was added by the *saṅgīti,kāra*: *Theriyā vutta,gāthānam sambandha,dassana,-vasena saṅgīti,kārehi ayam gāthā vuttā* = “This verse was spoken by those who held the council to show the connection of these verses to the nun.”

⁵¹ “Not bad-looking” (*apāpikā*). From the verse context, it is possible to freely but more accurately render *apāpikā* as “innocent,” reflecting the rogue’s expressed desire.

⁵² *Madhurañ ca...dumā*. Norman: This *ca* here possibly balances the *ca* in 372a. “Both the trees...and the trees...” (Horner), or *ca* and *ca* give the idea of simultaneity (see Thī:N 481-482n).

⁵³ Norman: “The towering (*samuṭṭhitā*) trees (*dumā*) send forth a sweet smell in all directions with the pollen of flowers” (Thī:N), taking *samuṭṭhitā* as qualifying *dumā*. Comy: *Kusuma,rajena samuṭṭhitā dumā ti ime rukkhā manda,vātena samuṭṭhāhamānā,kusuma,reṇu,jātena* (M *vātenā*) *attano kusuma,rajena* (M *raje*) *sayam samuṭṭhitā viya hutvā samantato surabhī vāyanti* = ~ means “these trees, by means of a gentle wind, rising up, full of flower pollen, are, as it were, rising up of themselves on account of their own flower pollen, and they exude fragrance all around.” According to SED, both *samuddhatā* and *samuṭṭhitā* can mean “raised up, towering” (SED svv), but Comy here seems to take it as “rising up,” and also PED: *samuṭṭhahati* (*sam* + *uṭṭhahati*), “rises up.” Cf Norman’s alt tr above.

- What delight is there for you, | if you were to plunge alone into the grove? [372]
- 8 Haunted by hordes of beasts of prey, | and disturbed by bull elephants in rut,⁵⁵
is the forest, remote and fearful, | into which you wish to go without a companion. [373]
- 9 You'll go about like a doll of shining gold, | like an apsara⁵⁶ in Citta,ratha.⁵⁷
O incomparable one, you will shine | in delicate Kāsī cloth⁵⁸ and lovely clothes. [374]
- 10 I'll yield to your power [I'll be at your beck and call] | if we dwell in the grove.
For there's none breathing dearer to me than you, | O kimnari⁵⁹ of tender eyes! [375]
- 11 If you'll do as I say, | come dwell happily in a house.⁶⁰
Be a dweller of a windfree palace. | Let the women do all your work. [376]
- 12 Wear delicate Kāsī cloth, | and beautify yourself with garlands and make-up.

⁵⁴ “Stirred by the breeze,” *māluteritā* = *māluta* (by the wind) + *īrita* (moved; pp of *īreti*), “moved by the wind” (Tha 754; Thī 372; Vv 42.2 = 81.6; Pv 11.12.3). See also PED & CPD, sv *īrita*. PED: *Māluta* (S 4:218; Tha 104; Thī 372; J 1:167, 4:222, 5:328, 6:189; Vv 902) is the proper Pali form for *māruta*, the stem form of *maru* = Vedic *marut* or *maruta* (wind, air, breeze).

⁵⁵ Comy: *Kuñjara,matta,kareṇu,lolitan ti matta,kuñjarehi hatthinīhi ca migānaṃ citta,tāpanena rukkha,gacch'ā-dīnam sākhā,bhañjanena ca ālolitaṃ* = ~ means “disturbed by bull elephants in rut and cow elephants, animals with tormented minds (burning with lust), and by the breaking of branches of trees, shrubs and so on.” *Kuñjara,-matta,kareṇu* can be glossed *hatthi,matto*, “elephant in rut” (VvA 158). See CPD: *āloḷita*.

⁵⁶ Apsara or celestial nymph (*accharā* or *dev'accharā*) (Ved *apsaras* = *āpa* (water) + *sarati* (flowing with), orig water nymph), a celestial nymph (M 1:253,10, 337,27*, 2:64,10 =V 3:17,22; M 2:64,12; U 22,24; Thī 374; Miln 169,27; J 2:93,7, 5:153,28*, 454,3*, 469,5, 6:269,28*, 289,27*, 590,16*; Vv 94, 152, 318 f (cf MA 2:24,3), 971; DhA 3:8, 19; PvA 46). They are said to inhabit the sky, but often visit earth. They are the wives of the gandharvas (*gandhabba*) or celestial musicians, and have the ability of shape-shifting. They are said to have crimson pigeon-like feet (*kakuṭa,pādīnī*, Comys explain that their feet are ruddy or crimson as a result of good karma arising from giving alms of massage oil (*makkhaṇa*), UA 172,8 = DhA 118,27; AA 1:318,2; Miln 169,27; *~iniyo* DhA 1:423,15; *inīnam*, DhA 1:119,32, 423). The gandharvas inhabit Citta,ratha: see foll n. In Greek mythology, the Naiads are freshwater nymphs (inhabiting fountains, springs, and rivers), Nereids (the seas) and Oceanids (the oceans). As in Indian mythology, the Greek also have Hamadryads (tree nymphs), Dryads (oak nymphs) and Oreads (mountain nymphs). See also Linda Covill, 2005.

⁵⁷ “Citta,ratha.” All the MSS read *Cittarathe*, except Se which has *Cittalate*. Both *Cittarathe* and *Cittalate* are parks in Tāvatiṃsa (the heaven of the 33 gods). Citta,latā is better known, and is described as a pleasure garden, 500 leagues wide. It arose through the good karma of Magha's wife, Cittā (Magha was Sakra's name in his last birth on earth) (DhA 1:271-275; J 1:202). The place is so called not only because of its association with Cittā, but also because there are various multicoloured creepers growing there (VvA 94). It is well known for the Āsāvati creeper which blossoms only once in a thousand years (DA 2:649; ThaA 101; J 3:248, 250; ApA 280 f). Citta,ratha (Skt *Citra,ratha*, “bright chariot” = the sun) is only mentioned in Thī 374 (one reading), ThīA 1:247 (one reading), and as Citra,ratha, in Mvst 32.5, 149.14, 217.2, 19.15 (Citta,ratha), 181.7, 451.20 & Divy 194 Caitra,ratha, in Mahāvīyut-patti 4197, Divy 194.2. The Skt sources say that it is a celestial grove constructed by the gandharva Citra,ratha for Kubera (better known as Vaiśravaṇa), one of the 4 celestial great kings, guardian of the north and regarded as the god of wealth. See prec n (apsara) & n below (kimnari).

⁵⁸ “Kāsī cloth” (*Kāsika,sukhuma*) = **379a**, prob “fine muslin” (ThīA:P 318 ad loc). Kāsī or Kāsikā was one of 16 great states (*mahā-jaṇapada*), with its capital at Bārāṇasī (Benares). It was well known as a great trade centre, famous for its delicate and expensive muslin (eg J 6:151, 450), and scents (J 1:355).

⁵⁹ “Kimnari” (*kinnarī*, masc *kinnara*), a mythical being, half human half birdlike, living in the mountains. They are timid but sing and dance beautifully, and have superbly beautiful eyes. They are often identified with *kim,purisa* (“what person?”) (A 1:77; AA 2:151). Best known account is found in **Canda,kinnara J**, a past life story of the Bodhisattva and Rāhula,mātā (VA 5:1008; J 1:91, 485/4:282-289; DhA 1:115; UA 169; ApA 95; VbhA 471). See also Thī 381; J 2:230, 4:252, 283, 5:42, 254, 6:422; Ap 17, 450. In Skt mythology, they are said to be in the service of Kubera: see prec n (Citta,ratha); and the kinnara (masc) are like centaurs, half man, half horse.

⁶⁰ On this pāda, cf **389d**.

- I will make numerous ornaments | of gold, gems and pearls for you. [377]
- 13 ⁶¹ Climb into a very costly bed, | decorated with sandalwood, scented with essences,
its beautiful canopy well washed of dirt, | with a spread of long-fleeced
bedcover and a fresh quilt. [378]
- 14 Just as a blue lotus risen up from the water, | enjoyed by no humans,⁶²
even so, you, brahmacarini, | will come to decay in your own limbs! [379]
- [Subhā:]
- 15 “What is it that you take to be the essence here, | in what is full of dead things,⁶³
that fills the cemeteries full?⁶⁴
Having seen this carcass, habitually breaking up, |
take care that you do not go out of your mind!⁶⁵ [380]
- [The rogue:]
- 16 Your eyes are like a fawn’s [a doe’s],⁶⁶ | like those of a kimnari in the mountains.
Gazing at your eyes, | my sensual delight grows all the more. [381]
- 17 Gazing at your eyes | in your spotless face like gold,
Comparable to a lotus bud, | my sensual delight grows. [382]
- 18 Even if you’re gone far away, I shall remember⁶⁷ you, |

⁶¹ The lines here are arranged as cd | ab, ie the second Pali line is tr first.

⁶² “Enjoyed by no humans.” Comy: *Yathā taṃ amanussa,sevitān ti tañ ca rakkhasa,pariggahitāya pokkharāṇiyā jātātā nimmanussehi sevitaṃ kenaci aparibhuttam eva bhaveyya*: ~ means “and through the lack of humans (*nimmanussehi*) who touch (*sevitān*) it because it has grown in a lotus pond haunted by rakshasas [demons], it would not ever be enjoyed by anyone” (ThA 254). The cpd *amanussa,sevitān* is a pun. It literally translates as “resorted to by non-humans,” but can be freely rendered as “enjoyed by no humans” or even “untouched by humans,” which is supported by Comy’s gloss, *nimmanussehi* and which fits the context here better. After all, this is poetry: in fact, one is reminded of these lines from John Gray: “Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, | And waste its sweetness on the desert air” (Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, 1750).

⁶³ “Full of dead things” (*kuṇapa,pūramhī*), which Comy glosses as *kes’ādi,kuṇapa,pūre* = “full of dead things, like head-hair, etc.” On *kes’ādi,kuṇapa,pūre*, see Tha:N 453n; cf SA 1:353 (on S 1:236): *nimuggā kuṇapamhete ti dasa,māse mātu,kucchi,saṅkhāte kuṇapasmim ete nimuggā* = “for ten months they are submerged in a corpse, that is, in a mother’s womb”: see S:B 499 n655. Cf *kesa,loma,nakha,dant’ādīni nānā,kuṇapāni* (Vism 11.21/345), which appears very similar to comy here, referring to “the apparently dead and therefore corpse-like” parts of the body (Thī:N 380n). Cf Vism 8.81-138/248-265 (details of the 32 body-parts).

For *pūra* in the sense of “filled,” see PED & BHSD (sv): this is the sense at Thī 253 (*puppha,pūram*, “full of flowers”) & Tha 279 (*dhira atthu pūre*, “a curse on ‘fillings’ [the body]!”). It can also be rendered as “full of,covered by,” depending on the context. Comy on Tha 279: *pūre ti ativiya,jegucchehi nānā,kuṇāpehi nānā,vidha,asucīhi sampunne* = ~ means “full of extremely disgusting variety of dead things and various types of impurities.” From this we see that *pūre* is derived from *pūra*, “filling.” Same derivation given by Comy at Tha 1150: *kesa,lom’ādino nānā-p,pakārassa asucino pūre paripunne* = “full filled with various impurities of various kinds, such as head-hair, body-hair, etc.

⁶⁴ Comy is silent here; but comy on Thī 502 explains: *sara kaṭasim vaḍḍhente ti punappunam tāsū tāsū jātisū aparāparam uppattiyā punappunam katasim susānam ālāhanam eva vaḍḍhente satte anussara* = ~ means “remember (*anussara*) the beings who are filling the cemeteries (*susānam*) again and again (*puna-p,punam*) in this and that birth, again and again (*aparāparam*), through birth again and again”; cf Tha 456. Norman takes *susāna,vaḍḍhana* to have the same meaning as *bhūmi,vaḍḍhana* (J 6:19). In Skt, we find *bhūmi,vardhana* (lex), meaning “earth-increasing” = corpse (SED sv). See Thī:N 380n

⁶⁵ “Out of your mind” (*vimano*): PED (sv *vimana*) suggests “infatuated” here.

⁶⁶ *Akkhīni ca tūriya-r-iva*. Comy: *Tūri* means doe (*migī*). It means “Your eyes are like a fawn’s” (*miga-c,chāpāya va te akkhīni ti attho*) (ThīA 254).

- like a bowl of poison, its potency gone [set before the eye].⁷³
 I see not what it would be: | for, it has been killed down to the root by “the path.” [386]
- 22 If it were for one unreflective, | or one who has not served the Teacher,⁷⁴
 you could have lusted⁷⁵ for someone like that— |
 but having lusted for this one who knows, you will grieve! [387]
- 23 For in the midst of blame and praise,⁷⁶ | joy and sorrow, my mindfulness stands firm,
 knowing that the conditioned is foul, | my mind clings not to anything at all. [388]
- 24 The well-farer’s disciple am I, | a traveller in a vehicle on the eightfold path⁷⁷
 [travelling in the vehicle that is the eightfold path].
 The dart is drawn out, free from the influxes⁷⁸— |
 I delight, having gone into an empty place.⁷⁹ [389]

⁷³ *Visa,patto-r-iva aggato* [Be *aggito*] *kato* [Ce *agghato hato*]. Comy has various readings. Comy (Be): *aggito kato ti aggito abhirato app’agghanako kato*. *Visassa lesam pi asesetvā apanihito vināsito ti attho* = “made like a fire” means made like having been taken out from the blazing fire. Of poison, the meaning is this: it has been removed, driven out, without leaving behind even a drop of poison. Comy (Ce): *agghato hato ti agghato abhithato, app’agghanako kato, visassa lesam pi asesetvā apanihito vināsito ti attho* = “its worth destroyed” means with its worth destroyed, devalued of worth.” Comy (Ee): *aggato kato ti aggato abhirato app’agghanako kato* = “made foremost” means of little value on account of delight in making it foremost.” CPD sv, giving the Skt as *agrataḥ kṛtaḥ*: “put before (the eyes), ie imagined, figured to one’s self,” quoting this context (Tha 386, 394). I follow CPD, and give an amplified tr. (For other readings of this Comy, see Thī:N 386n). Norman: “The presence of *agghanaka* in both M and Ce persuades me that we should read *agghato* with Ce, and translate *agghato kato* as ‘considered as regards value,’ ie ‘valued as’ (Thī:N 386n). CPD (sv *abhithata*) prefers *abhithata* to *abhirata*. See also CPD sv *app’-agghanaka* & appendix p545 (¹*aggha*). The phrase *aggato kataṃ* occurs in Thī 394, where its Comy explains *aggato* as *purato*, “(put) before (oneself).” On the sandhi -r- see Thī:N 3n.

The imagery of sparks here seems to allude to the one about non-returning, prob an *antarā,parinibbāyī* (one who attains nirvana in the intermediate state or between death and rebirth in Suddhāvāsa): see SD 2.17(3); **Purisa,gati S** (A 7.52/4:70-74), SD 2.17(5); **Sa,upadisesa S** (A 9.12/4:380), SD 3.3(3). If this were the case, then the Subhā Therī,gāthā (or at least this statement) was composed or added after Subhā’s passing.

⁷⁴ Comy: *satthā vā anupāsito siyā ti satthā vā dhamma,sarīrassa adassanena yassā itthiyā anupāsito siyā* = ~ means “through not having seen the ‘Dharma body’ [the embodiment of the Dharma, ie the Buddha].”

⁷⁵ Be Ee Se *palobhaya*; Ce *palohaya*. Comy had various readings. Comy (M): *palobhassa upachandassa* = ~ means “have seduced.” Comy (Be): *palobhaya upagaccha* = “have lusted for means have approached.” Comy (Ce): *palobhaya upacchandaya* = ~ means “have lusted for.” Skt *upacchand-* occurs, in the causative, meaning “entice, seduce” (SED sv). In Skt *pralubh-* means “to lust after,” and the causative means “to cause to lust after, allure, entice, attempt to seduce” (SED sv), which fits exactly here. For *so* with 2nd person vb, see Thī:N 24n.

⁷⁶ “Praise and blame.” Comy: *akkuṭṭha,vandite ti akkose vandanāya ca* = ~ means “abuse and honour.” For pp used as action words, see Thī:N 261n. Cf *akkuṭṭha,vanditaṃ* (Sn 702), explained as *akkosañ ca vandanañ ca* (SnA 492).

⁷⁷ Comy: *magg’aṭṭhaṅgika,yāna,yāyini ti aṭṭhaṅgika,magga,saṅkhātena ariya,yānena nibbāna,puraṃ yāyini upagatā* = ~ means “travelling, going, in the noble vehicle, that is called the eightfold path, to the city of nirvana.” For *yāna* as syn of *magga*, see PED: *yāna*.

⁷⁸ *Āsava-k,khaya,ñāna*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16) & **Abhidhamma** lists four *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’ā-sava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijj’āsava*) (D 16.1.12/2:81, 16.2.4/2:92), Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937/373 f). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [43] is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10-20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

⁷⁹ This serves as Subhā’s reply to the rogue’s invitation to her to “come dwell happily in a house” (376). An “empty place” is one of the places suitable for meditation and spiritual cultivation. For meaning analyses of

- 25 For I have seen the well painted | puppets and marionettes,⁸⁰
hitched up with sticks and strings,⁸¹ | and made to dance in various ways.⁸² [390]
- 26 Removed are those string and sticks,⁸³ | thrown away, broken, scattered,⁸⁴
not to be found, made into bits and pieces— | where would the mind find a roost?⁸⁵
[on what would this mind fix itself?] [391]
- 27 This body of mine, being of such a kind,⁸⁶ | exists not without these states.⁸⁷
When it exists not with any state, | where would the mind find roost?
[on what would this mind fix itself?] [392]
- 28 Just as you when you see | a picture painted on the wall,
perverse is your view: | the perception that they are human is groundless.⁸⁸ [393]

suññāgāra, see SD 48.9 (9.1). On other lists of places suitable for meditation, see **M 10,4.2**: n on “an empty place,” SD 13.3.

⁸⁰ Ce Se *dāruka, cillakāni vā*. Ee *dāruka, cillakā navā*. PED explains *pillaka* (sv) as “the young of an animal, sometimes used as a term for a child.” *Dāruka, pillakāni vā’ ti* = ~ means “forms made of wood, sticks and so on.” For *dāru, pillaka* in the sense of “doll,” cf *dāru, dhūtalikā*, “wooden doll” (V 3:126). In our times, “puppets” are usu directly manipulated by the hand, while “marionettes” are controlled by sticks, strings, etc.

⁸¹ *Tantīhi ca khīlakehi*. Comy: *khīlakehī hattha, pāda, piṭṭhi, kaṇṇak’ādi, atthāya thapita, daṇḍehi* = “by fixing sticks for the purpose of hands, feet, backs, ears, etc.” The suffix *-ka* here clearly gives a sense of diminutive.

⁸² Be Ce *panaccakā*. Ee *panaccitā* (“caused to dance”). Comy: *vividham panaccakā* [M *panaccitā*] *ti yanta, sutt’-ādīnam añchana* [M *-channa*] *vissajjan’ādinā paṭṭhapita, naccakā* [M *-naccitā*]. *Panaccantā* [M *panaccantānam*] *viya diṭṭhā ti yojanā* = ~ means “a dancer, set up through the pulling and releasing, etc, of the strings of a mechanism, etc. They are seen to be as if dancing. This is the connection.” Based on this, Norman prefers this reading (Thī: N 390n).

⁸³ Comy: *tamh’uddhaṭe tanti, khīlake ti sannivesa, visiṭṭha, racanā*-[M *-rada*,] *visesa, yuttam upādāya rūpaka, -samaññātamhi tantimhi khīlake ca thānato* [M *paṭṭhānato*] *uddhaṭe bandhato vissatṭhe visum karaṇena aññamaññam vikale tahim tahim khipanena paripakkate vikirite* = ~ means “if the string and stick, regarded as little forms, assembled by the connecting together of the exquisite arrangement, that is distinguished by its arrangement, are removed from their positions, their bindings are thrown away, separately, one after another scattered, strewn, by being thrown in bits and pieces here and there.” The pronoun *tamh’* can be taken as either *tamhī* or *tamhā*. If taken as loc, it should be understood as going with *tanti, khīlake*; but if taken as *tamhā*, it means “when the string and sticks have been removed from it” (Thī: N 391n).

⁸⁴ Ee Se *paripakkate*; Be *parikrite*; Ce *paripakkhite*. See prec n. On *vikale*, Norman notes: “Just as *vekalla* is opposed in meaning to *sākalya* at KhpA 187, so I take *vikala* to be the opposite of *sakala*. It means ‘without all its parts, not whole, in pieces’” (Thī: N 391n). Cf meanings “mutilated, impaired” in Skt (SED sv).

⁸⁵ Comy: *Avinde* [Be *na vindeyya*] *khaṇḍaso kate ti, potthaka, rūpassa avayave khaṇḍite potthaka, rūpam na vindeyya* [M *-eyyam*] *na upalabheyya* [M *-eyyam*] = ~ means “when the parts of a modelled (*potthaka*) figure are taken apart, the modelled figure is not to be found, could not be found (*upalabheyya*)” Norman says that *avinde* (Ce Ee) is the correct reading, and “I would suggest that the reading of Be [*na vindeyya*] arose because the gloss had crept into the text” and on the corruption of this text see same: Thī: N 391n.

⁸⁶ Be Ce *tathūpamā*; Ee *tathūpamañ*. Norman proposes reading *tathūpamañ dehakam imam* (“This little body, being of such a kind”) and a sg form of the vb (*na vattati*, “does not exist,” for *na vattanti*) (Thī: N 392n). PED however gives the meaning “limbs” for *dehakā* (pl), and this is consistent with comy. See ThīA: P 315 n1.

⁸⁷ *Dhammehi vinā na vattati*. Comy: “A body does not exist (*na vattati*) without its parts, (without) the phenomena of the parts (*avayava, dhammehī*). This being so, where would one’s mind find a roost?” (ThīA 258)

⁸⁸ *Addasa cittikam bhittiyā katam*. Norman: “(so) the wi[s]dom of men is useless.” Comy: *Yathā kusalena citta, -kārena bhittiyam haritā, lena makkhitam littam tena lepam datvā katam ālikhitam cittikam itthī, rūpena addasa passeyya* = “just as you were to see a picture of a woman painted on a wall by a skillful painter, who, having prepared the plaster, has smeared it with yellow pigment.” “Yellow pigment,” *haritāla*, which SED explains: “yellow orpiment or sulphuret of arsenic (described as the seed or seminal energy of Vishnu = *harer vīryam*,” and *haritāla* (sv) is “painting the person, theatrical decoration,” in which case, it is likely to be “orpiment yellow” which is a light to

- 29 Like dreaming of a golden tree, | made to look real like an illusion,⁸⁹
you blind one, you run after what is false | as if in a sham show in the midst of a crowd.⁹⁰
[as if chasing a false image in the midst of a crowd.] [394]
- 30 It is like a little ball set in a hollow,⁹¹ | with a bubble in the middle,⁹² with tears.
And eye secretions⁹³ arise there in various ways,⁹⁴ | forming lumps⁹⁵ in every⁹⁶ eye. [395]
- [The Council Elders:]**
- 31 Plucking it out, Subhā, the one beautiful to behold, | and with detached mind,⁹⁷
unattached, said,
Come, take you this eye! | She gave it to the man at once. [396]

brilliant yellow that is darker than empire yellow, also called king's yellow or mineral yellow. Not in PED. *Addasa* is an aorist used as an optative: see BHSg: 32.119-124, but see Thī:N 393n.

⁸⁹ Comy: *Mayam viya aggato katan ti māyā,kārena purato upaṭṭhāpitam* [M *upadhāvasi vā*] *māyā,sadisam* = ~ means "like an illusion made up by a conjurer before one." Norman: "It is clear from the explanation that Dhammapāla had the reading *aggato*, but a reading *agghato katan* (see Thī:N 386n) would make excellent sense, ie 'you run towards something valued like (= as valuable as) illusion'." (Thī:N 394n). I do not follow Comy here. See 386b above.

⁹⁰ Comy: *jana,majjhe-r-iva ruppa,rūpakan ti māyā,kārena mahājana,majjhe dassitam rūpiya,rūpa,sadisam saram viya upaṭṭhahantam; asāran ti attho* = ~ means "like forms of gold (*rūpiya, rūpa,sadisam*) shown in the midst of a crowd by a conjurer, they appear as if they have substance. The meaning is that they are without substance [essence]." Norman: The ref here is presumably to confidence tricksters who try to deceive credulous bystanders and persuade them to buy what seems to be (ie has the form of) silver [*rūpiya*] (Thī:N 394n). The Arthasāstra (2.14) deals with the methods of producing and detecting this kind of frauds. I have rendered *ruppa,rūpakan* ("false silver") idiomatically as "fool's gold."

⁹¹ Comy: *Vaṭṭāni-r-ivā ti lākhāya guḷikā viya* = ~ means "like a little ball of lac." *Koṭar'ohitā ti koṭare rukkha,-susire ṭhapitā* = ~ means "placed in a hollow (*koṭare*), such as in a hollow tree."

⁹² Ce Ee *bubbulakā*; Be *pubbulakā*. Norman notes that since Skt *budbuda* ("the pupil of the eye," SED: *nayana*) exists, Ee is preferred (Thī:N 395n). Comy: *Majjhe bubbulakā ti akkhi,dala,majjhe ṭhita,jala,bubbula-[M pubbulha, Be pubbulā,]sadisā* = ~ means like a water bubble standing in between the eye-lids (of an eye)."

⁹³ Comy: *Pīlikoḷikā ti akkhi,gūthako* = "ear-wax." *Akkhi,gūtha* is explained as *akkhi,mala* ("ear-impurity") at PvA 198. **The Vijaya S** (Sn 11) mentions *akkhi,gūthaka* amongst the impurities oozing from the 9 openings (Sn 197).

⁹⁴ Comy: *ettha jāyatī ti etasmim akkhi,maṇḍale ubhosu koḷsu visa,gandham vāyanti nibbattati* = ~ means "it arises from both ends of this circle [sphere] of the eye, producing a toxic smell." (ThaA 259)

⁹⁵ *Pīlakolīkā ti vā akkhi,dalesu nibbattanakā pīlakā vuccati* = ~ means "what comes out from the eyelids is called 'secretion' (*pīlakā*)." PED, sv *koḷikā* (adj), says that it applies to boils, and in *pīli,koḷiko (itthi)* means, "(a woman) having boils of jujube size," which cannot be correct; but sv *pīlikoṭikā*, gives "eye secretion" and refers to JPTS 1884:88 (misprinted as 68). Norman: The tr is prob a reminiscence of such phrases as (*pīlikā kola,mattiyo ahesum*) (Sn p125), and "since in this context the word must be a noun, I should favour the second of these alternatives" (Thī:N 395n).

⁹⁶ Comy: *vividhā ti nīl'ādi,maṇḍalānañ c'eva ratta,pūt'ādīnam sattannaṃ patalānañ ca vasena aneka,vidhā* = ~ means "of various kinds, because of circles of cloud grey, etc, and because of the seven membranes [parts] that are red, yellow, etc." **The Attha,sālinī** describes the 7 "membranes" of the eye as follows: "Therein (the eye) are the white, the black, the red, hardness [extension], water [cohesion], fire [heat] and wind [mobility]. The eye is white from the abundance of phlegm, black from that of bile, red from that of blood, hard from the abundance of the earth element, fluid from that of the water element, warm from that of the fire element, and moving from the wind element." It then goes on to describe how the eye-faculty works (DhsA 307; cf Vism 14.47/445). Although such descriptions are remarkable in terms of scientific observation, their purpose is for the reflection on impermanence, and so on. Comy: *cakkhu,vidhā ti cakkhu,bhāvā cakkhu-p,pakārā vā. Tassa aneka,kalā,paggaha,bhāvato piṇḍitā ti samuditā* = "From their state being connected with various bundles of eye-parts or eye-processes, so that that they arise (*samuditā*) as lumps."

⁹⁷ Be Ce Ee *asaṅga,mānasā*. Se *alagga,mānasā*. Comy: *asaṅga,mānasā ti katthaci pi ārammaṇe anāsatta,cittā* = ~ means "with a mind not clinging to any support [sense-object] anywhere."

- 32 And at once his passion ceased, | and right there he begged for her forgiveness:
Be whole again, brahmacarini [who lives the holy life], | such a thing will not
happen again! [397]
- 33 In violating⁹⁸ such a person, | in embracing⁹⁹ such a blazing fire,
I have seized a venomous serpent!¹⁰⁰ | Be whole again! Forgive me! [398]
- 34 And then freed from him,¹⁰¹ the nun | went before the noble Buddha.¹⁰²
Seeing him with the marks of noble merit,¹⁰³ | her eye became whole again as before. [399]

— evaṃ —

Abbreviations & Bibliography

[For editions of Therī,gāthā, see K R Norman 1971:xv.]

Abbreviations

~	[swung dash or wiggly line] In the commentaries and notes here, it stands for the lemma (headword, phrase, etc), given in bold, which is defined or explained in what follows.
Be	Burmese (Myanmar) ed (of Pali text), usually the Chatṭha Saṅgāyanā (6th Council) ed, Rangoon, 1959.
BHS	Buddhist Hybrid: see following.
BHSD	Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary by F Edgerton. New Haven, 1953b.
BHSG	Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar by F Edgerton. New Haven, 1953a.
CDIAL	<i>Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages</i> by Ralph L Turner, 1966.
Ce	Ceylonese = Sinhala ed (of Pali text): either Simon Hewavitarne Bequest ed (1918) or Buddha Jayanti ed (1960s-70s; digital ed 1991-1994)

⁹⁸ Be Ce *āsādiya*; Ee *āhaniya*. CPD (sv *āsādeti*) accepts *āsādiya*, which Comy glosses as *ghaṭṭetvā* (“having struck, having offended”).

⁹⁹ Comy: *liṅgiyā ti pajjalitam aggim āliṅgetvā* = ~ means “having embraced a blazing fire, as it were.” PED (sv *liṅgeti*) says that the absolutive is formed as from the vb **liṅgati*. See also BHSD: *liṅgita*.

¹⁰⁰ This is the only case in Tha of a snake imagery referring to the body, and significantly it is uttered by a man in reference to a woman's body. See Blackstone 1998:74.

¹⁰¹ Comy: *tato ti tasmā dhutta, purisā* = ~ means “by that rogue of a person.” Norman, however, thinks that there is no reason to take this as the usual “after that, then.” (Thī:N 399)

¹⁰² Comy: *buddha, varassa sammā, sambuddhassa santikaṃ upagacchi upasaṅkamati*, “she went up to, approached, the noble Buddha, the fully self-awakened one.” It is probable here, notes Norman, that Comy is here taking *buddha, varam* to mean “the choice one of the enlightened ones, ie best of.” In his review of Tha:N, however, de Jong has given reasons for not taking *buddha, varam* as a tatpurusha cpd. We can therefore take it to mean “the Buddha, the choice one, ie the excellent Buddha. (Thī:N 399n)

¹⁰³ Comy: *passiya vara, puñña, lakkhaṇan ti uttamehi puñña, sambhārehi nibbatta, mahā, purisa, lakkhaṇam disvā* = ~ means “having seen him with the great man's marks, that have arisen through the accumulation of the highest merit.” As Norman has pointed out, the phrase *vara, puñña, lakkhaṇa* is not very clear, since it can be a tatpurusha or a bahuvrihi: “the mark of excellent merit” or “the one possessing the mark(s) of excellent merit.” The mark of excellent merit,” being singular, can only be a tatpurusha, and in this context refer to Subhā's blind eye, but it seems odd to say that she is healed when she sees herself. It is more logical that the Buddha heals her when he sees her affliction, “but to assume that *passiya* goes with *Buddhassa* in pāda b is straining the syntax. If pāda d had contained a past participle, eg *katam*, we could have understood *tena* thus: ‘(by him) having seen...the eye was restored.’ If we could assume that this poem was originally composed in a dialect where *ca* became *ya*, we could then take *passiya* as *passi ya* = *passi ca*, and translate: ‘she went to the Buddha, and he saw...her eye was as before.’ In view of my doubts about this verse I translate *vara, puñña, lakkhana* as a bahuvrihi, referring to the Buddha.” (Thī:N 399n)

Comy	Commentary (to the Therī,gāthā = ThīA, etc). The suffix –A denotes a commentary.
CPD	Critical Pali Dictionary, Copenhagen, 1924- .
Ee	European (Pali Text Society) ed (of Pali text): see Pischel 1883b.
Ke	Khmer (Cambodian) ed (of Pali text). Phnom Penh, 1958
Lex	= lexicon; lexx = lexica. A book containing an alphabetical or other systematic arrangement of a considerable number of words in a language or discipline and their definitions (Skt kośa).
M	ThīA (Therī, gāthā Commentary), ed E Möller, 1893.
mc	metri causa (on account of metre) lengthening, shortening or modification of a sound or syllable in word to fit the metre. (A “metre” is a measure, long or short, of sound units occurring regularly in verses.
Mvst:J	The Mahāvastu tr JJ Jones. 3 vols. Sacred Books of the Buddhists. London, 1949-56.
P	Pischel’s ed of Thī, 1883: see Pischel 1883b.
PM	<i>Pali Metre</i> = AK Warder 1967.
Se	Siamese (Thai) ed (of Pali text): 2nd ed, Bangkok, 1926-28.
SED	Sanskrit-English Dictionary by M Monier-Williams. New ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899
Tha:eO	Oldenberg 1883a.
Thī:N	Norman 1971.
Thī:eP	Pischel 1883b.
Thī:ePr	Pruitt 1997.
ThīA:eM	Möeller 1893.
ThīA:Pru	Pruitt 1999.
Tib	Tibetan.

Bibliography

- Analayo Bhikkhu
[] “Beautiful eyes seen with insight as bereft of beauty—Subhā Therī and her male counterpart in the Ekottarika-āgama.” *The Journal for the Sati Center for Buddhist Studies* 2 (forthcoming).
- Barnes, Nancy Schuster
1987 “Buddhism.” In Arvind Sharma (ed). *Women in World Religions*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987:105-133.
- Blackstone, Kathryn Rennie [née Rennie]
1990 “The struggle for liberation in the Therīgāthā.” MA thesis. Hamilton, ON: McMaster University, 1990. Published 1998.
1998 *Women in the Footsteps of the Buddha: Struggle for liberation in the Therīgāthā*. [Rev ed of MA thesis, 1990.] Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998. Concurrently: Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998.
- Covill, Linda
2005 “Apsarases: The Buddhist Conversion of the Nymphs of Heaven,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 22,2, 2005: 131-140.
- De Jong, J W [Jan Willem]
1972 Review of *The Elders’ Verses I: Theragāthā*, tr with an intro and notes by KR Norman, London, 1969. In *Indo-Iranian Journal* 13 1972:297-301
- Edgerton, Franklin
1953a *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar*. New Haven, 1953.
1953b *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*. New Haven, 1953.
- Geiger, Wilhelm
1916 *Pāli Literatur und Sprache*. Strassburg, 1916. Eng ed = 1943.
1943 *Pāli Literature and Language*. Calcutta, 1943. See Geiger & Norman 2000.
- Geiger, Wilhelm; & K R Norman
2000 *A Pāli Grammar*. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2000. Rev ed of Pali section of Geiger 1943.
- Gross, Rita

- 1993 *Buddhism After Patriarchy*. Albany, NY: State Univ of New York Press, 1993:48-54.
- Hinüber, Oskar von
1996 *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996. Repr New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1997
- Horner, I B [Isaline Blew], 1896-1981
1930 *Women Under Primitive Buddhism: Laywomen and Almswomen*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1930. Repr Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, 1999.
- Lang, Karen R (née Schmitz)
1986 "Lord Death's Snare: Gender-related imagery in the Theragāthā and the Therīgāthā." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2 1986:63-79.
- Lienhard, Siegfried
1975 "Sur la structure poétique des Theratherīgāthā." *Journal Asiatique* 263 1975:375-396.
1984 "A History of Classical Poetry in Sanskrit-Pāli-Prakrit." In Jan Gonda (ed), *A History of Indian Literature* 3,1. Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz, 1984.
- Mizuno, Kōgen
1993 "A comparative study of the Theragāthā and the Therīgāthā." *Bukkyō Kenkyū* [Buddhist Studies] 22, 1993:3-83. (In Japanese)
- Möller, Edward
1893 (ed) *Param'attha,dīpanī (Therī,gāthā Aṭṭhakathā) [ThīA or ThīA:eM]* Oxford: Henry Frowde, 1893.
- Mrozik, Susanne
2007 *Virtuous Bodies: The physical dimensions of morality in Buddhist ethics*. [Study of Śāntideva's Śikṣā,samuccaya.] Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: 105.
- Murcott, Susan
1991 *The First Buddhist Women: Translations and Commentary on the Therīgāthā*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1991.
- Norman, K R
1971 (tr) *The Elders' Verses II Therīgāthā*, London: Pali Text Society, 1971. Repr *Poems of the Early Buddhist Nuns*, see Rhys Davids & Norman, 1997. Rev tr = 1997. "Pāli Literature: including the canonical literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of all the Hīnayāna schools of Buddhism." In Jan Gonda (ed), *A History of Indian Literature* 7,2. Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz, 1987.
1997 = Rhys Davids & Norman, 1997.
- Oldenberg, Hermann
1883b *Thera,gāthā [Tha:eO]*. London: Pali Text Society, 1883. Bound with R Pischel 1883a.
- Pischel, Richard
1883 *Thera,gāthā [Tha:eP]*. London: Pali Text Society, 1883. 2nd ed 1966 with Appendices by KR Norman & L Alsdorf, 1990. Bound with H Oldenberg 1883b.
- Pruitt, William
1997 *Therīgāthā Commentary (Paramatthadīpanī VI)*. Oxford Pali Text Society, 1997.
1999 (tr) *The Commentary on the Verses of the Therīs [Therī,gāthā Aṭṭhakathā, Paramattha,dīpanī]* [1998]. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1999 (with corrections).
- Rennie, Kathryn
1990 →Blackstone, Kathryn R
- Rhys Davids, C A F; & K R Norman
1997 (trs) *Poems of the Early Buddhist Nuns*. Verse tr CAF Rhys Davids; prose tr K R Norman (rev ed of 1971). 1989.
- Trainor, Kevin
1993 "In the eye of the beholder: Non-attachment and the body in Subhā's verse (Therīgāthā 71). *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 61, Spring 1993: 57-79.
- Warder, A K
1967 *Pali Metre*. London: Pali Text Society, 1967.
1968

070730; reconstructed after computer crash:

070815-17 070924 080829 090723 110609 121223 130414 140130 150119